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THE TRADITIONAL TEXT OF THE HOLY GOSPELS. By BURGON and MILLER. London : George Bell & Sons. 1896. 10s. 6d. *net*.

THIS book should be of great interest and value, as it gives us the defense of the traditional text of the New Testament by Dean Burgon, its principal champion, edited by Mr. Miller, himself a textual student, and author or editor of several books on the subject. It is a great disappointment, therefore, to find the book so singularly inconclusive ; not that there is any probability that the main positions of textual criticism of the New Testament will ever be discredited, but that a book showing so many evidences of minute scholarship should after all be so many things that a book of this kind ought not to be ; *e. g.*, so ignorant of the laws of evidence, so blind to the true reading of facts, and above all so garbled in its presentation of the evidence.

What are the facts, as our authors themselves present them? First, the ancient witnesses to the text of the gospels are the MSS. ~~BN~~ACDE; the Fathers; and the ancient versions, viz., the Old Latin, the Syriac, meaning by this the Peshito, and the Egyptian. Secondly, all of these, even the best of them, had been sadly and intentionally corrupted, in the interest of heresy, harmonizing, and so on. Thirdly, about the time of Basil, the two Gregorys and Chrysostom, the church, as part of a process of determining things which had been more or less floating, settled the text of the New Testament in its pure form. Fourthly, copies still multiplied, some of them representing the corrupted text, but the great body conforming to the fixed type established by the church. But at last Erasmus, using great care and critical judgment in his selection, chose four MSS. of the considerable number available, and from these constructed a text which has become the authorized text. These facts are not presented all together, they are scattered through the book, but they represent its main contentions. And it is not at all difficult to put your finger upon the one thing which vitiates the whole position. The authors not only secretly prefer authority to testimony, but they elevate this into a principle. They seem to think it strange that good churchmen will not follow this lead, and accept the authority of the church in regard to this as in regard to all matters else. They compare it to the acknowledged authority of the church in the matter of the canon. But the canon has to be decided by a faculty which the church possesses, that of detecting the marks of inspiration in a book. This matter of the text, on the contrary, is a matter of scholarship, and not of spiritual intuition. In fact, the application of some of the tests by

which the church decided the canon has been a considerable factor in misleading the church in its settlement of the text. Orthodoxy, *e. g.*, and literary smoothness would enter legitimately into the decision of the question whether a book should be admitted into the list of sacred books. But they are of no value in deciding the totally different question, what an author has written, a question which has to be answered by the testimony, and by internal evidence of a different sort. In fact, this admission of the active interference of the church in settling this question in favor of the traditional text, goes far towards overthrowing the whole argument of the book. This concurrence of the great mass of the later testimony might be a strong point, if this concurrence was without any external pressure. But here is the repeated claim that the church has exerted this pressure, which invalidates the concurrence.

The treatment of the ancient witnesses to the text is characteristic and singular. These witnesses are the MSS. B¹ACDE, the fathers, and the Old Latin, the Syriac Peshito, and the Egyptian versions. Of these the MSS. are all set aside as comparatively worthless, two of the three versions are treated in the same way, and the testimony of the Fathers is sadly garbled. Out of the whole mass, the Peshito and the Fathers are treated as being of any value. The reasons for this discrimination are singular. C is only a palimpsest, which shows in what estimation it was held, and only a fragment at that. B and A are on vellum and written in uncials, and the latest news about both material and character is that they rather discredit a manuscript than otherwise, showing it to be out of the great stream of testimony. Then, the very fact that they are preserved is against them, continual use being what destroyed the rest, while these refuse MSS. were allowed to remain on the shelf. Then they hail from Alexandria, and the rather shady Origen had to do largely with their production. Finally, they show heretical tendencies, and a "philosophical treatment of tender facts." As to the Old Latin version, its various forms are to be accounted for by the supposition that they are not variations of one version, but separate versions, and that their various readings are derived from the erroneous accounts of the gospel facts and teachings which prevailed before the publication of our present gospels. That is, we have in the various forms of the Old Latin, not different readings of those gospels, but other gospels mixed up with the standard or canonical gospels. The Egyptian versions pass under the condemnation dealt out to everything connected with Alexandria.

The testimony of the fathers is given more in detail, and we have an opportunity to criticise the treatment of details, as well as of generals, by this singular book. Lists are given which show that the proportion of quotations favoring the traditional text is to those confirming the neologian text as 2630 to 1753. But then it goes on to exhibit a number of the more important examples, in which the proportion is still more favorable to the traditional text. And it is in this list that we get our chance to scrutinize the methods employed. *E. g.*, βαπτίσαντες, instead of βαπτίζοντες, is given as the neologian reading of Matt. 28 : 19. It is the reading of Tregelles and of Westcott and Hort in the margin. That is, it is not the neologian reading. In the appendix to St. Mark, Eusebius is given as the only father favoring the omission. A true statement would be that these authors trace all the patristic testimony to the omission to Eusebius, the number of fathers who fall in with Eusebius being five. Luke 22 : 43, 44 is represented as omitted in the neologian text. As a matter of fact, it is omitted in only the margin of the Revised Version, bracketed by Lachmann, and double bracketed by WH. The same representation is met by the same state of the facts in Luke 23 : 34. In John 1 : 18 the reading Θεός for υἱός is given as the neologian reading, whereas LTR are on the other side. In John 3 : 13, ὁ ὢν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ is said to be omitted in the neologian text, the fact being that it is omitted in only WH Rmg. In John 21 : 25 the verse is said to be omitted in the neologian text, when only T omits it. In Matt 11 : 27, the substitution of ἀποκαλύψῃ for βούληται ἀποκαλύψαι is classed as neologian, whereas it is the reading of only L mg. In Matt. 1 : 25, there is said to be no patristic authority for the omission of πρωτότοκον, but Tischendorf makes two quotations from Ambrose for the omission. If this is the way in which the patristic testimony is treated, the proportion of witnesses to the traditional and the neologian text would have to be considerably modified.

Another attempt at analytical treatment is to be found in the discussion of the skeptical and otherwise suspicious character of the MS. B⁸. Under this head we find cited the omission of τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ in Luke 24 : 3, whereas it is omitted in only D, Itala. Another case is the change of Θεοῦ to κυρίου, Acts 20 : 28, a reading found in ACDES, whereas B⁸ read Θεοῦ. In John 14 : 14, the insertion of με is spoken of as a slur on prayer in the name of Christ. In Matt. 24 : 36, the insertion of οὐδὲ ὁ υἱός is put into the same category. But when you reflect that the insertion is from Mark 13 : 32, and that all the texts read εἰ μὴ

ὁ πατήρ *μόνος*, the charge of skepticism is seen to have a sort of recoil. The omission of ὁ Θεός in Mark 10:46 is another specimen of the same kind of alleged skepticism. And so the substitution of *ὁς* for Θεός in 1 Tim. 3:16 is treated in the same way. By the way, the patristic evidence for the change is here quite strong, but then it does not come within the province of the book to mention this fact. The omission of passages about eternal punishment is also put in evidence. Specimens are the substitution of *ἁμαρτίας* for *κρίσεως* in Mark 3:29, and the omission of ὁ σκώληξ αὐτῶν οὐ τελευτᾷ, καὶ τὸ πῦρ οὐ σβέννυται, in Mark 9:44, 46. But the first of these passages does not even weaken the testimony to eternal punishment, it rationalizes it. And in the second the omitted passage is only reserved for vs. 48, where it is stronger for the previous omission. In Matt. 21:44, the skeptical omission of the verse is chargeable against D, not B⁸. In Mark 4:12, there is said to be an omission of the forgiveness of sins, but only τὰ ἁμαρτήματα is omitted, not ἀφεθῇ. In Mark 10:34, there is said to be an omission of the danger of riches, but as it is the theme of the passage, and as its omission in this part of the discussion only marks a transition from the general difficulty of entering the kingdom to the special difficulty that the rich encounter, we can afford to pass it over as on the whole not very dangerous. A special class is made of those passages which show a "philosophical obtuseness to tender passages." In the account of the institution of the sacrament, the omission of *φάγετε*, of τὸ before *διαθήκης*, and of *καινῆς* with the same, is instanced. Trivialities all. And then the omission of *φάγετε* is supported by overwhelming evidence, including all the versions. On the whole, one is justified in comparing this with the treatment of witnesses by a lawyer on the other side, not with the summing up by a judge.

It is gratifying to find that the internal evidence for the omission of the closing verses of Mark is not ignored, but explained. This is fortunate, as this internal evidence is really the strongest case of the internal evidence entirely discrediting a passage that I remember. But the book explains it by the supposition that Mark had Peter's help up to this place, and after this told the story for himself. There are two insuperable difficulties in the way of this, however. In the first place, the difference of every kind is so great that you have to say, in this case, that Peter was the real author of the body of the gospel, Mark being only his amanuensis. But in all such cases the author's name is given to the book, not that of the scribe. And, secondly, the appendix is evidently summarized from Luke and John. But just as

evidently, Matthew and Luke are dependent on Mark in the body of the gospel, and there is thus a gap in time between the gospel and the appendix, and the latter was wanting in the first copies of the gospel. That is to say, the copies which omit the appendix were made from the original, and those which insert it were made from this later form, which is just the claim of the critics, only they would account for the facts in another way.

On the whole, the showing made for the traditional text is not strong. It would be very much stronger if the editor would cull from his heterogeneous matter the really relevant material, and present that in a temperate way.

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A DISSERTATION UPON THE GOSPEL COMMENTARIES OF S. EPHRAEM THE SYRIAN. By J. HAMLYN HILL, D.D. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark. New York: Imported by Charles Scribner's Sons. 1896. Pp. 169, 8vo. \$2.

THE interest in the *Commentary* of Ephraem the Syrian upon the *Diatessaron* of Tatian continues to grow, and finds expression in various tracts whose misfortune is that they are in danger of being apologetic rather than scientific, and are the work of persons, like Dr. Hill and myself, and almost everyone else who has written upon the subject, who are absolutely ignorant of the Armenian, the only language in which S. Ephraem's work has come down to us. Both of these considerations furnish matter for regret; yet perhaps we ought not to be unduly sorry that the apologetic side of the question has been forced to the front, for the *Diatessaron* has become a leading factor in every question relating to the origin of the gospels and the character of the text. If reviewers had not been skeptical as to the authorship of the commentary in question and anti-apologists, like the author of *Supernatural Religion*, had not exhausted their powers of debate in a last vain effort to prove that Tatian never wrote a Harmony upon the Gospels, and Ephraem had never commented upon it, we should not have been driven into that close examination of the internal and external evidence which has finally shattered a body of adverse criticism which, for its own sake, ought never to have been brought forward; nor should we know what we now know with regard to the early commentaries upon the gospel in the Eastern church and their dependence